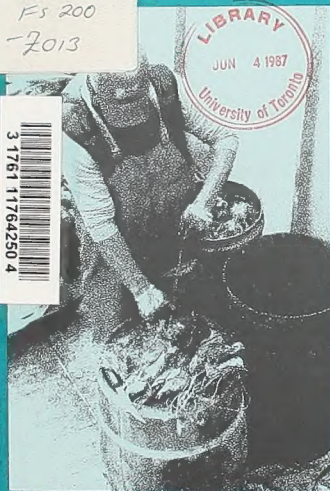
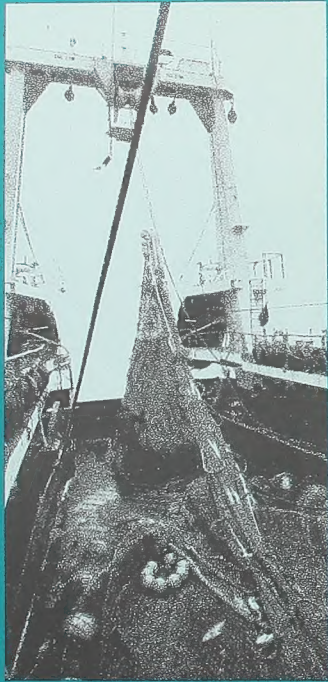


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Publications

Income and Employment of Atlantic Fishermen

Highlights of the 1984 Survey of Atlantic Fishermen

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In the spring of 1985, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans surveyed the 1984 income and employment situation of commercial fishing licence-holders in the Atlantic provinces and Quebec. The major findings are presented in this publication.

Purpose and Organization

The purpose of this survey was to update information on the Atlantic commercial fisherman: fishing revenues, operating cash costs, other sources of income, fishing effort and annual activity. The first income and employment survey was conducted by the department for the Task Force on Atlantic Fisheries (1982) and was based on the 1981 fishing year. The Task Force recommended that regular updates be conducted for the benefit of the industry and policy-makers. The 1984 survey is a response to that recommendation.

The Surveys Unit of the Economic and Commercial Analysis Directorate in the department prepared the 1984 Survey of Atlantic Fishermen. Statistics Canada conducted personal interviews with licensed fishermen, and processed and edited the survey in conjunction with the Surveys Unit. The department analyzed the data through a project funded under the International Youth Year Program.

The 1981 survey involved approximately 1,300 respondents in Newfoundland, New Brunswick, P.E.I. and

Table 1: Participation in the Commercial Fishery
By Province, 1984

	Nova Scotia	New Brunswick	PEI	Quebec	New foundland	Total
Full-Time						
Licensed	8,409	4,284	2,150	5,455	13,457	33,755
Active	7,729	3,937	2,141	4,101	12,234	30,189
% Active	92%	91%	99%	75%	91%	89%
Part-Time						
Licensed	4,843	2,388	1,252	2,752	14,160	25,396
Active	3,548	1,842	940	1,499	6,676	14,507
% Active	73%	77%	75%	54%	47%	57%
Total Licensed	13,252	6,672	3,402	8,207	27,617	59,150
Total Active	11,278	5,779	3,081	5,600	18,960	44,796
% Active	85%	87%	91%	68%	69%	76%

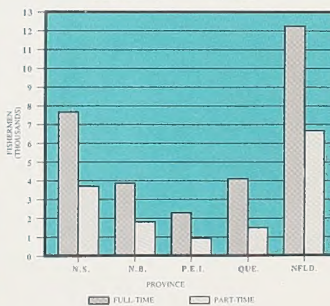
Nova Scotia. The 1984 survey included Quebec and involved 1,847 respondents.

While all of the fishermen interviewed held 1984 commercial licences, not all of the licences were used. This report is based only on those 1,433 respondents who actually earned fishing incomes that year. However, numbers of fishermen have been weighted to represent the entire population of Atlantic commercial fishermen.

Weeks of activity and income figures are presented as averages. It should be noted that the Atlantic fishery is diverse in terms of length of season, prices received for different species, and access to other employment. Averages therefore may not always be indicative of what exists in many parts of Atlantic Canada.

Graph 1

PARTICIPATION IN COMMERCIAL FISHERY
LICENCE TYPE BY PROVINCE



Participation

People who want to fish and sell all or part of their catches must purchase a federal government personal commercial fishing licence. In 1984, 59,150 individuals in the five Atlantic provinces received licences. According to the survey, 44,796 or 76 per cent of these people earned an income from the fishery in 1984.

It is useful to know how many fishermen intended to earn their livings solely from the fishery. In 1981, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans began classifying Atlantic commercial fishing licences as full-time or part-time to distinguish between people who relied on fishing for their livelihoods and those who did not. A full-time fisherman is defined as a person who fishes consistently for a specified period of time for his/her area, without other work during that period except self-employment in the primary industries on a limited basis, or incidental or occasional jobs during the required fishing period. A part-time fisherman, then, is a commercial fisherman who does not meet these requirements.

In 1983, a trial program began, involving a "bonafide" category applicable to fishermen who use ves-

sels 50 feet in length or less in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence. This applied to P.E.I. and parts of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and meant that in those provinces there was no longer a clear full-time/part-time licence distinction. In Quebec, there is no specific licence designation.

The 1984 survey asked fishermen to identify themselves as full- or part-time licence-holders. Because Newfoundland remains the only province where the distinction is made formally, designations in the other four provinces were determined according to the response provided by the surveyed fishermen themselves. The split between full- and part-time fishermen by province is illustrated in Graph 1. According to the survey, 30,189 fishermen earned their livings from the fishery in 1984.

The number of licence-holders, as well as the proportion of those who earned income from fishing in 1984, are displayed by province in Table 1. Newfoundland accounts for most of the Atlantic fishermen, with 27,617 licences issued (47 per cent), although only 69 per cent of these licence-holders fished in 1984.

Almost 90 per cent of all full-time fishermen used their licences to earn income in 1984; less than 60 per cent of part-timers used their licences. Quebec had a relatively low proportion of active full-time fishermen compared to the other Atlantic provinces (75 per cent compared to between 91 per cent and 99 per cent). Part-timers were less active: 47 per cent in Newfoundland used their licences; 54 per cent in Quebec; between 75 per cent and 77 per cent in the other provinces.

Annual Activity

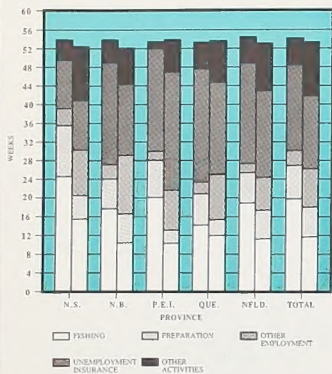
The Atlantic fishing industry is diverse. Season lengths vary according to the availability of species, weather, ice conditions and area closures. In some areas, fishing seasons are year-round, while in others they may be only a few weeks. The amount of time the fishermen devote to their seasons varies as well, some going the distance while others stop part-way through and supplement their incomes from other sources.

In 1984, Atlantic fishermen fished an average of 17 weeks, ranging from 22 weeks in Nova Scotia to 13 weeks in Quebec. An average of another seven weeks was devoted to preparation and related activities. Only five weeks were spent working at other paid employment. On average, fishermen collected UI for 17 weeks.

The distribution of annual activity for full-time and part-time fishermen is shown in Graph 2. The longest period of fishing activity is in Nova Scotia where full-timers fished 25 weeks and part-timers 15 weeks. Full-time fishermen in Quebec have the shortest fishing period among full-timers, at 14 weeks. Full-time fishermen in

Canada

Graph 2

ANNUAL ACTIVITY IN WEEKS BY PROVINCE
FULL-TIME/PART-TIME FISHERMEN

general spend almost twice as long preparing for the fishing season (an average of seven weeks) as part-time fishermen do.

Although full-time fishermen, by definition, fish most of the fishing season, there is a noticeable lack of time spent in other occupations. Full-time fishermen collect UI for an average of 17 weeks. The longest period, 24 weeks, was among Quebec fishermen, where the average fishing season, including preparation and other related time, was 21 weeks. In contrast, the average full-time Nova Scotia fisherman collected UI for only 10 weeks, and devoted 35 weeks to fishing, preparation, and other fishing-related activities.

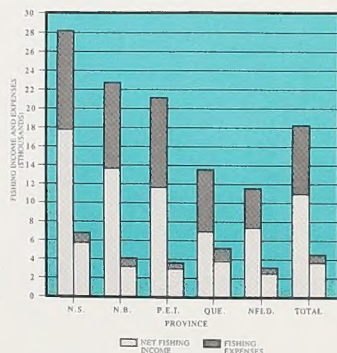
Among part-time fishermen, the longest period of fishing and related activity was in Nova Scotia (21 weeks) compared to a low of 13 in P.E.I. Time spent at other occupations averaged nine weeks a year. On average part-timers collected UI for 15 weeks. Clearly, for full-time and part-time fishermen alike, UI is an important income supplement.

Fishing Income

Gross fishing incomes varied greatly among the provinces, from a low of \$8,703 in Newfoundland to a high of \$21,373 in Nova Scotia. Full-time fishermen earned their incomes mainly through gross fish sales, while part-timers earned theirs mainly from crew shares or wages. The full-timers' gross fishing income ranged from \$11,645 in Newfoundland to \$28,281 in Nova Scotia, while the part-time range was \$3,291 in Newfoundland to \$6,739 in Nova Scotia.

Fishing expenses also varied depending on the type of gear required for various species, whether a fisherman was a crewman or skipper, the length of the vessel, and so on. They included direct expenses on fuel, bait, ice, salt, and crew shares paid out; overhead expenses such as insurance; gear and vessel repairs; and principal and interest payments. Expenses paid out by full-time fishermen were more than eight times those of part-timers. Graph 3 displays gross fishing income less expenses, providing net fishing incomes for full-time and part-time fishermen by province. The Nova Scotia fishery supported the highest net fishing incomes (\$16,430 full-time;

Graph 3

FISHING INCOME AND EXPENSES
FULL-TIME/PART-TIME, BY PROVINCETable 2: Income Sources for Fishermen
By Province, 1984

	N.S.		N.B.		P.E.I.		QUE.		N.F.L.D.		ATLANTIC	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Net Fishing	16,430	5,532	12,667	3,159	10,743	3,042	6,211	3,029	6,805	2,610	10,232	3,528
Non-Fishing Employment	1,210	4,913	907	3,582	529	2,116	1,066	3,233	664	2,227	880	3,165
Transfers	549	704	317	683	159	289	577	440	397	622	433	610
Regular UI	349	991	554	2,373	793	2,432	1,204	1,391	349	1,381	524	1,478
Fishermen's UI	2,681	997	3,661	805	4,042	1,486	2,267	2,155	3,421	1,332	3,150	1,276
Total Income*	22,242	13,564	18,698	10,805	16,424	9,626	11,611	10,257	11,735	8,314	15,649	10,272

FT — Full-time fishermen PT — Part-time fishermen

* Includes other income sources not described above.

\$5,532 part-time); Quebec had the lowest full-time income (\$6,211) and Newfoundland had the lowest part-time (\$2,610).

It is interesting to note the distribution of fishing incomes among provinces. On average, 56 per cent of all active fishermen in the Atlantic provinces earned less than \$5,000 in net fishing income. On a provincial basis, 39 per cent earned less than \$5,000 in Nova Scotia compared to 67 per cent in Newfoundland.

Income from Other Sources

Both full-time and part-time fishermen generally rely on other employment — for example, fish processing, construction, forestry — to supplement their fishing incomes, although such employment is scarce in most small fishing areas. The average income from non-fishing employment was \$1,625. However, there was a significant spread between the supplementary incomes earned by full-timers and part-timers. Full-time fishermen worked an average of only two weeks in other paid employment and earned \$880. Part-time fishermen worked nine weeks in other employment and earned \$3,165.

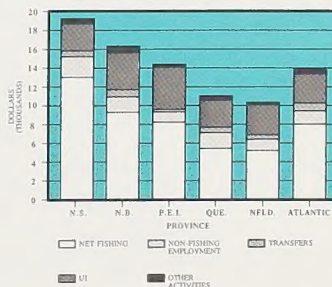
Other sources of income include investments, and various government transfers such as pension, family allowance, and unemployment insurance. UI is by far the largest transfer from the federal government. Trawlermen who work as paid employees may be entitled to regular UI, and many part-time fishermen earn their entitlement for regular UI through non-fishing employment. Average benefits from regular UI were \$524 for full-timers and \$1,478 for part-timers. Self-employed fishermen are eligible for fishermen's UI from which full-timers received an average of \$3,150 and part-timers \$1,276 in UI benefits.

Total Income

Total income from major sources for the average fisherman for each province is shown in Graph 4. Total (pre-tax) income is comprised of net fishing revenues, non-fishing earnings and all transfers. Averages vary greatly according to geographical region, from a low in Newfoundland of \$10,530 to a high in Nova Scotia of \$19,453.

The difference in incomes is more evident when a distinction is made between full-time and part-time fishermen. A summary of the average income earned from

Graph 4

TOTAL INCOME SUMMARY
ALL RESPONDENTS BY PROVINCE

major sources by licence designation is presented in Table 2.

Fishermen, on average, earn modest incomes from all sources. Roughly 43 per cent of active Atlantic fishermen earned less than \$10,000 in total income and 16 per cent made less than \$5,000. Only 7 per cent made more than \$30,000. It is clear why unemployment insurance is a major income supplement for the average fisherman.

Conclusion

The 1984 survey indicates that in the Atlantic fishery there were more than 59,000 fishermen, with over 30,000 relying on fishing for their primary source of income. The average fisherman fished 17 weeks, spent six weeks in preparation for the season and one week in other fishing-related activities, five weeks in other occupations, collected UI for 17 weeks, and spent six weeks in other activities. He/she made \$8,046 in net fishing income. Unemployment insurance accounted for \$3,374 and other employment for \$1,625. The average income from all sources was \$13,896.

The survey results demonstrate considerable diversity within the industry, between full-time and part-time fishermen, and across provinces. A more detailed report of this survey is available by writing to:

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Economic and Commercial
Analysis Directorate
Department of Fisheries and
Oceans
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